Homework assignment #1: Morphological segmentation

Due Wednesday, January 11 | *hard copy due at the beginning of class*

Use the Chichewa data set shown below to answer the following questions.

(1)   List all of the distinct morphemes that you can find in this data set.

(2)   Do some of the morphemes have more than one surface form? If so, list both/all forms and *attempt* to characterize the relevant phonological environment for each.

(3)   Try to give a gloss for each morpheme that you find. Which ones are difficult to give a gloss for, and why? Is there anything noteworthy or unusual about the meanings of some of the inflectional morphemes in this data set?

Chichewa

(A)	[dá:mbɔ]	'marsh'	[madá:mbɔ]	'marshes'
	[fu:nɔ]	'wish, need'	[mafu:nɔ]	'wishes, needs'
	[pɛmpʰɛ:rɔ]	'prayer'	[mapɛmpʰɛ:rɔ]	'prayers'
	[bwɛ́:zi]	'friend'	[mabwɛ́:zi]	'friends'
(B)	[mu:ntʰu]	'man'	[βa:ntʰu]	'men'
	[mú:pʰwa]	'man's sister's child'	[βá:pʰwa]	'man's sister's children'
	[mwá:na]	'child'	[βá:na]	'children'
(C)	[mná:si]	'neighbor'	[aná:si]	'neighbors'
	[mza:mba]	'midwife'	[aza:mba]	'midwives'
(D)	[tʃiβá:lɛ]	'coconut tree'	[viβá:lɛ]	'coconut trees'
	[tʃipa:nda]	'calabash'	[vipa:nda]	'calabashes'
	[tʃisɔ́:ŋga]	'wooden arrow point'	[visɔ́:ŋga]	'wooden arrow points'
	[tʃitsú:rɔ]	'iron'	[vitsú:rɔ]	'pieces of iron'
	[tʃá:ka]	'year'	[vjá:ka]	'years'

Some notes:

• The differences between groups (A), (B), (C), and (D) are not phonologically determined (there are no phonological rules relating the shape of morphemes between these groups). However, within each group there may be relevant phonological effects.

• The accent as in [á] marks high tone, which is not relevant for this problem.

• Hint: The base of [mwá:na] 'child' and [βá:na] 'children' in (2) is [á:na].